1-2011

janC2011(one)

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Recommended Citation
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The meaning of meaning you

something about snow, something
about flying down the air
with nothing for wings, with no kind of wings

something about being there
in such a way that any room
organizes itself around you

I can’t help it, it’s love
makes you do all this
and love that lets me see you do it.

It is dumb and tremendous and all over you
like music when your mind’s on something else.

But there is nothing else.

Just this, with you
sitting in the middle of it
having just come back from everywhere.
Something about a boat in the sky,
something about jungles, something about a smile.

I look at you like a little boy
who has just found the book he always wanted to read,
I mean the man hoping for it all his life.

9 January 2011
There are things
that have faces.
They face us.

Lustrous with distance
to see them is
to be caressed.

This disperses
and regathers.

There is water
on it often
and no ship.

Where would one
come or go from
to be here

he asked I had
no answer but edges

things sometimes
activate the space
between you have
go slow to hear
them one of us said.

10 January 2011
Getting ready to be right,
write:

_The Wrong of Winter_

not by Stravinsky. What
do mortals know of winter?
We who have eaten all
the colors know
all the dialects of light.
A shudder in the wind,
our knowledge has cold hands.
But who are we?

10 January 2011
A good essay is one such that the reader of it has no choice but start writing in response, contradiction. Every word is an investigation. Enough to know that, and everything to be learned.

*Exemplum:* The classic Golden Age detective story—clue, deduction, induction, decipherment—blossomed in the age when Science ascended in public view to be both a fashion and a requirement. No surprise that sleuths were scientists—amateurs like Sherlock Holmes or professional like Dr. Thorndike—or polymaths like Philo Vance. But as time passes, wars come and go, science seems more humdrum, familiar, dangerous with a whole raft of not so interesting fatalities of its own. The scientist detective gives way to the working cop. Procedurals replace brainteasers, and violence spills from the battlefield into gangland, professional detectives combatting professional murderers. Efficiency replaces intuition and deduction. Recently, the procedural shifts from ordinary detectives and ordinary police (however skillful) and turns to crazed personages who are more avengers than decipherers. The passage from calm Holmes’s scarred chemistry bench to the half-demented lethal tattooed lady is a vivid histomap of the last century or so.

* * *

Why should the essay say any more than this? The reader instantly leaps to agreements and disagreements, comes up with further instances, evidences, contradiction, revisions, adding ideas or rubbing them out. Why should the writer spoil that pleasure by preempting the arguments? Is it a gift to the reader, this business of reading, gives the reader the dance to do.

11 January 2011
Does it look as if these things mean it
a coaster with a coffee cup a vase of flowers
specify: anemones indigo and pink and red
we care about these things because we are the living
and have nowhere to turn but what is here.
Thereafter in a blue glass vase settled they
opened in the warm room, snow light, the blue
light between day and remembering. The wolf
hour people called it, teeth and running and deep warm fur.

11 January 2011
The opportunity lives with me
said the blue jay the seed
is my savior in all this snow

the cardinal asked if that is so
who do I who am such a different hue
find the same salvation in my need?

Ah foolish folks the sparrows call
we proliferate around your feet
eat anything and are no color at all.

12 January 2011
WATCHING BIRDS IN THE SNOW

I wish Charles Parker would come back
music without intelligence is soup,
real intelligence not learning and not vogue.
The body thinks its way out through the breath.

12 January 2011
If I had anything it would be now
the woman entered the voice
she saw a body painted on the ceiling
it was blue and had gold stars on it
not like the constellations we see over America

it was her own body and it ceilinged her
safe in the walls of the voice
in which she was speaking.
The man lay quiet in the listening
knowing that she had come
and done to time what had to be done

and the walls were down. And
all of a sudden hearing heard.

12 January 2011
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HIS SILVER WHISTLE ICED HER LIVING HOUSE

curling the names
across the ice
the Canadian Shield problem
too many versts for too few names

and every one of them is named me
I too incolate the tundras
I too am waiting for everything
using nothing touching everything

I am a shadow
waiting for its man
there’s nothing solid about me
seafoam and roses you know how
long they last

wait, how did you
get onto the ice

I am a margin that nothing meets

but you your twirl, camel, illegal leap
and now the sit-spin
that screws right down through the ice
down through the water
down through the earth
down through up the other side of the sky

and you are gone from my mind
with all your cold soft clothes
but icicles are gleaming in the sun
on my roof mine mine
back to the me work again
the basic broken radio of a self
plug yanked out of the no-wall
trickle-charge info of your things
but now I don’t know your name either

asparagus? deep-trenched white cylinder?
wet mango stone original seed
all slippery with religion vampire?

the bite was on the back of your neck
never your throat
who would blemish or suck loose
the gorgeous instrument from which
an ordinary word we need
keeps coming keeps coming

I hardly needed to use teeth
just a word or two of my own
let me speak, skater,
and then you zipped away
flip-girtled over power knees
sneering back “no word
is your own let alone two”

and you were gone
it must not be too far from here
this sky-rink with no boundaries
cars parked all over the sky
their headlights burning to show her Earth
this amateur stripper giving the cosmos
the show of its life

we live
to be revealed